

Connect Group Discussion Guide

LEADER
EPHESIANS - PT 2
9/20/2026

PASSAGE SUMMARY

Paul is moved to pray for the church at Ephesus.

Central to his prayer is that the believers have knowledge of their total, ultimate, and permanent victory in Christ.

Paul prays higher than their circumstantial wellbeing and farther out than their life expectancy. In doing so, Paul is both authoring and modeling a prayer for these Christians to live out the win they already have in Christ.

WARM UP

Open your group time with casual fellowship/questions. Taking a few minutes to connect before jumping into discussion helps create an environment where people feel known, valued, and ready to engage.

See [Series Introduction](#) for tips and ideas.

READ THE PASSAGE

Read [Ephesians 1:15-23](#) (ESV)

For established groups:

Try reading the passage in the ESV, then read it in 1-2 other translations. What words are different? Does the phrasing change the meaning in a significant way in places? You can also pull up a Bible reference app and check out what some of these words mean in the original language.

ENGAGE WITH THE PASSAGE

1. What reputation did this church have that was so potent that it reached Paul's ears?

They were known for two things: faith in Jesus and love for all the saints. It's interesting how these two go hand in hand. You know a healthy tree by its fruit--and someone who has faith in Jesus will love the saints.

2. How has your faith changed how you love?

What we believe should change how we live. The more our lives align with the teachings of Jesus, the more His love pours out of us and changes... well, everything.

BACKGROUND

Ephesus today is some of the best preserved Roman ruins. They had a massive library, the Library of Celsus, the third largest of its era.

In Acts 19, Paul had several misadventures during his trip to Ephesus, including one story of a silversmith who made idols inciting a riot against Paul. The craftsmen felt that a new religion that didn't require idols was bad for business.

Ephesus is also where Priscilla and her husband Aquila disciplined a Jew named Apollos, who became a helpful part of the church in Achaia.

TIPS FOR YOUR CONVERSATION

- Remember that your Discipleship/Groups Pastor is here to support you every step of the way.
- Before you read scripture, pray a short prayer asking God's Spirit to help you understand what He wants you to receive from His Word. It is His breath that brings life and opens our minds and hearts to spiritual truth.
- Ask "Holy Spirit, help me/us understand Your word."

For newer groups: take some time to discuss the idea of what faith is (trust, confidence, belief) and how faith comes out through our love (actions, good works). James 2:14-26 is a good place to look further.

For established groups: How do we love differently as our faith has grown than we did when we first came together? What has deepened our faith over the years? How can we encourage and challenge each other more in this area?

3. Paul gives us a list of specific things he's consistently praying over this church in Ephesus.

See vv. 17-19. Have everyone take out a notecard or open the notes app on their phone. Take a few minutes to write down specific needs for our church, our group, and one another. Then, pause and pray over these things together as a group. Before you leave, commit to continue praying for these needs throughout the week, following Paul's example of continually praying for the church.

4. Once Paul gets started talking about Jesus, he just keeps going! What do these verses help us see about Christ?

See vv. 19-23. The connection point in between all these things: Authority. Matthew 8:5-13 and Matthew 28:18-20 also talk about Jesus' authority in a way that sheds light on today's verses.

5. We often think about the inheritance God has waiting for us. But Paul says that we are also God's inheritance. What does it mean for you that God looks at His people as treasures He looks forward to fully receiving?

God looks forward to His inheritance in **US!** Take some time to reflect as a group on this truth. How does this make you feel? How would you live your life differently/view yourself if you deeply believed this? What has come against this truth in your life to convince you that you are less than His inheritance?

6. The church is the body of Christ, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. Then we, as members of that body, have different functions as we embody Christ to the world. What is your function in the body of Christ? How does this extend past church meeting time and into your life as a whole?

Welcome discussion about gifts, roles, functions, parts of the Body of Christ! Meet your group where they are and let them know each part and role is valued, accepted, and important. Can you help someone in your group get connected? Point them to rockbridge.cc/nextsteps

NEXT STEPS

Last week, we asked people to sit down and write some things about their Ephesus and their soul. Did anyone have any surprises from that exercise? Did anything stand out to them?

1. What things needed to change to better nourish your soul?
2. What do you believe that needs to be expressed through love?

Give your group a few minutes of quiet to think about this one and make notes before splitting into groups of 2-3, to discuss their answers. It's okay if someone didn't remember to do the practice! You may want to set an alarm that reminds you to send a reminder after a few days to help them remember.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE FOR THE WEEK

TIP:

TEXT THIS TO YOUR GROUP
TOMORROW AS A REMINDER!

Draw a timeline on a blank sheet of paper. Put a dot labeled "right now" on the left side of the line. Draw a line where you imagine your life expectancy is. Draw an arrow at the right to show the line continuing into eternity.

Now write some prayers you have of things you want God to do. Connect them in your mind or with a symbol to where on the timeline they fit. Make sure to also pray for things that will continue long past your lifespan and into eternity. Your impact through prayer can be felt through the ages, long after your memory fades. Ask Him what He wants to do.